The Story of the Vulture and the Kite

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Chapter 1: The Inevitability of Death

A Boastful Vulture: The Claim of Keen Sight

Hazrat Sheikh Saadi recounts an incident where a vulture spoke arrogantly in front of a kite, proclaiming that no creature could match its far-reaching sight.

The Vulture’s Boast:

Vulture:

"There is no creature with vision more far-reaching than mine."

In response, the kite reminded the vulture that excessive boasting was not praiseworthy and challenged it to demonstrate its vision by describing what it could see in the surrounding wilderness.

The Kite’s Reproof:

Kite:

"Such excessive boasting is not good. Tell me, what do you see today in the wilderness around us?"

The Vulture’s Sight Tested: A Grain of Wheat

Hazrat Saadi narrates that, from the distance of a full day’s flight, the vulture scanned the ground and proudly declared that it had spotted a grain of wheat lying upon the earth. The kite, astonished, found it hard to believe.

The Vulture’s Claim:

Vulture:

"If you would believe me, I have seen a single grain of wheat lying upon the ground."

The kite’s scepticism led it to lower its gaze from the heights to observe the vulture’s actions more closely.

The Trap: The Vulture’s Fall

As the vulture descended towards the grain, it failed to perceive the hunter’s snare laid cunningly around the bait. Entangled, it became a captive, unable to escape. Hazrat Saadi reflects on how the vulture did not realise that seeking that single grain would lead to its downfall and imprisonment.

The Kite’s Rebuke:

Kite:

"Of what use was it to see the grain, when you had no vision for the hunter’s snare?"

The Moral: Fate Cannot Be Escaped

Hazrat Saadi observes that the vulture, once so vocal, now stood with its neck caught in the snare. All attempts to avoid destiny proved futile, for fate's decree was already in motion. The vulture's keen sight failed it at the critical moment, as death reached out to claim it. Saadi concludes with a reflection on the limits of skill and pride: just as a swimmer's arrogance is useless in a sea without a shore, so too does human foresight falter before divine will.